

Amendments to the Claims

The list of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-26 (Canceled)

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a slot machine game using a symbol matrix formed by a plurality of rows intersecting a plurality of columns, the plurality of rows and columns including a plurality of symbols, comprising the steps of:

- (a) wagering upon at least one symbol from the plurality of symbols;
- (b) randomly rearranging the plurality of symbols;
- (c) displaying the rearranged symbols; and

(d) issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more symbols wagered upon appearing in adjacent to each other in the symbol matrix, in addition to, or instead of, issuing another award based on the appearance of other of the plurality of symbols not wagered upon appearing on a payline.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering on all of the symbols from the plurality of symbols.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering upon a subset of the symbols from the plurality of symbols.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering the same amount on each of the symbols from the plurality of symbols.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering a different amount on each of the symbols from the plurality of symbols.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering upon each of the symbols from the plurality of symbols in a predetermined order.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said wagering step (a) further comprises the step of wagering upon each of the symbols from the plurality of symbols in any order.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of awarding the player based upon the appearance of two or more same symbols wagered upon appearing adjacent to each other.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more different symbols wagered upon appearing adjacent to each other.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of issuing awards based upon the

appearance of one or more symbols wagered upon and one or more wildcard symbols not wagered upon appearing adjacent to each other.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more symbols wagered upon appearing adjacent to each other in at least one of a horizontal, vertical and diagonal direction.

Claim 38 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more symbols wagered upon appearing adjacent, with at least one of said symbols appearing in the leftmost column of the symbol matrix.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a game according to claim 27, wherein said awarding step (d) further comprises the step of issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more symbols wagered upon appearing adjacent, with at most one of said symbols appearing in each column of the symbol matrix.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a slot machine game using a symbol matrix formed by a plurality of rows intersecting a plurality of columns, the plurality of rows and columns including a plurality of symbols, comprising the steps of:

- (a) wagering upon symbols in the plurality of symbols to be arranged in a predetermined order;
- (b) randomly rearranging the plurality of symbols;
- (c) displaying the rearranged symbols; and

(d) issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more same symbols wagered upon appearing:

- (1) with said symbols wagered upon in adjacent to each other in the symbol matrix;
- (2) with said symbols wagered upon adjacent to each other in horizontal or diagonal directions;
- (3) with at least one of said symbols wagered upon appearing in the leftmost column of the symbol matrix; and
- (4) with at most one of said symbols wagered upon appearing in each column of the symbol matrix.

Claims 41-54 (Cancelled Without Prejudice or Disclaimer) .

Claim 55 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a slot machine game using a symbol matrix formed by a plurality of rows intersecting a plurality of columns, the plurality of rows and columns including a plurality of symbols, comprising the steps of:

- (a) randomly rearranging the plurality of symbols;
- (b) displaying the rearranged symbols; and
- (c) issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more same symbols appearing:
 - (1) with said symbols in adjacent to each other in the symbol matrix; and
 - (2) with said symbols adjacent to each other in horizontal, vertical and/or diagonal directions.

Claim 56 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a slot machine game using a symbol matrix formed by a plurality of rows intersecting a plurality of columns, the plurality of rows and columns including a plurality of symbols, comprising the steps of:

- (a) randomly rearranging the plurality of symbols;
- (b) displaying the rearranged symbols; and
- (c) issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more same symbols appearing:
 - (1) with said symbols in adjacent to each other in the symbol matrix;
 - (2) with said symbols adjacent to each other in horizontal, vertical and/or diagonal directions; and
 - (3) with at least one of said symbols appearing in the leftmost column of the symbol matrix.

Claim 57 (Previously Presented): A method of playing a slot machine game using a symbol matrix formed by a plurality of rows intersecting a plurality of columns, the plurality of rows and columns including a plurality of symbols, comprising the steps of:

- (a) randomly rearranging the plurality of symbols;
- (b) displaying the rearranged symbols; and
- (c) issuing awards based upon the appearance of two or more same symbols appearing:
 - (1) with said symbols in adjacent to each other in the symbol matrix;
 - (2) with said symbols adjacent to each other in horizontal, vertical and/or diagonal directions;
 - (3) with at least one of said symbols appearing in the leftmost column of the symbol matrix; and
 - (4) with at most one of said symbols appearing in each column of the symbol matrix.